

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

The Christian Freeman.

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MRS. PRIESTLEY.

It is difficult, and often impossible, to obtain materials for an accurate biography of women of exalted character who have fulfilled the important duties of wives and mothers. Their influence, although visible in its result, is so subtle as almost to be imperceptible in its operation, and the life of a woman devoted to the duties of her home offers but few incidents of importance to those beyond that home. Yet, in reading the biography of men of mark we feel a natural interest in the domestic relations which have served to form their character, for the wise and good usually acknowledge with gratitude that tendencies to evil have been checked, and virtuous aspirations encouraged, by the religious training of a mother or the wholesome counsel and tender sympathy of a wife. Perhaps it is well that the histories of such women cannot be written, for in England their name is Legion.

We are not able to give a sketch of the life of Mrs. Priestley, but in an autobiography of Mrs. Schimmelpenninck, who in early days was her intimate friend, we find various notices and anecdotes that throw much light on her character, and confirm the truth of the description given by her husband long before the appearance of Mrs. Schimmelpenninck's book.

In the memoirs of Dr. Priestley he says, "that in his thirtieth year, while he was living at Warrington, he married a Miss Wilkinson, the daughter of an ironmaster in Wales. This proved a very suitable and happy connection. My wife being a woman of excellent understanding much improved by reading of great fortitude and strength of mind, and of a temper in the highest degree affectionate and generous, feeling strongly for others and little for herself, also greatly excelling

in everything relating to household affairs, she entirely released me of all concern of that kind, which allowed me to give all my time to the prosecution of my studies and the other duties of my station." What higher praise can a wife desire?

When Dr. Priestley accepted the office of librarian, or rather companion, of Lord Shelburne, it was necessary for him to leave Leeds and place his family at Calne, in Wiltshire. The utmost economy was desirable, for his salary at Leeds had been very small, and the expense of removal to so a great a distance was considerable. The day after they reached their new abode, the furniture being unpacked, the floor covered with boxes, and everything in the utmost disorder, Lord Shelburne made an inopportune call. He found the wife of his future librarian mounted on steps papering the wall. Dr. Priestley began to express his regret that his lordship should find the house in such confusion, and his wife so occupied, that she could not receive him in a suitable manner. With much dignity and good sense Mrs. Priestley interposed, saying, "No, my dear, Lord Shelburne is a statesman, and he knows that people are best employed in doing their duty; he will not esteem us the less for our occupation."

On one occasion Lord Shelburne presented her with a ticket to attend a celebrated trial. She expected to take her seat quietly, but the tumult, the rush to obtain places, the treading on and even the tearing of clothes of the fashionable mob, caused much inconvenience and some degree of danger to the inexperienced. On her return home Lord Shelburne asked her how she had been pleased. "Indeed, my lord," she said, "I find the conduct of the upper so exactly like that of the lower classes, that I was thankful I was born in middle life."

Another anecdote related by the author of the "Memoirs of Port Royal" is very characteristic of the good Doctor.

While he was occupied in some important investigation of the properties of air, the result of which was to be sent to the annual meeting of the Royal Society, he was compelled to leave home for a few days. He had placed certain gases, contained in inverted glasses, in water, and he gave strict directions to Mrs. Priestley and also to the housemaid to disturb nothing in his study. It would have been well for him if he had locked the door and taken the key. The housemaid, from some unaccountable mistake, thinking, perhaps, that her master only alluded to his papers, entered the room, removed the glasses, wiped them carefully, placed them on a shelf, and threw away the water. Mrs. Priestley was deeply grieved at this untoward accident, and dreaded the effect of the disappointment upon her husband. On his return she met him at the door, and begged him to prepare for something that would cause him much pain. The thought flashed upon him that some misfortune had befallen one of his children. When the misadventure was told he exclaimed in a cheerful manner, "Thank God it is only that! It might have pleased Him to take one of the children. It will only cost me a few weeks' labour, and if some other should make the discovery before me it will be equally useful to the world."

In after years, grief for the loss of her youngest son hastened the death of the affectionate mother, who, although "a woman of large beneficence," identified herself so much with the objects of her love, that their sorrows and pains were intensified in her sympathetic and loving heart. Her manner is said to have been somewhat repelling to strangers, but she had a kind smile and "a sweet hidden flow of sympathy." Her friendship was most valuable—faithful, strong, and tender. Her friend, who in after life became highly orthodox in her views, says that she had an abiding sense of God's presence, of his loving-kindness and impartial justice; that she was a person of unswerving integrity of purpose, inflexible truth, and a clear, uncompromising sense of duty."

After the persecution which compelled Dr. Priestley and his family to leave Birmingham, their domestic comfort was

much disturbed by the difficulty of inducing servants to stay with them, from a fear that the unpopularity of their master rendered it dangerous to live with him. Mrs. Priestley behaved nobly in all these times of trial, but it seems that these continual annoyances, and the sad scenes that she had witnessed, affected even her strong mind, for when they emigrated to America she persuaded her husband not to settle in one of the large towns, but to seek the quiet and retirement of a country life. Friends who were interested in the scientific fame of the Doctor regretted that he did not live in Philadelphia, but in the obscure village of Northumberland he completed many literary works, which with less leisure would have been left unfinished; works scarcely known by the rising generation, but which have had a deep and far-spread influence for good.

Mrs. Priestley died in the year 1796. "The memory of the just is blessed."

THE WONDERFUL RING.

THERE is a story of a certain prince who had a wonderful ring which pricked his finger whenever he was doing anything wrong. It was given him to help him always to keep upright and good, and he was told that so long as he wore it he would prosper. At first he set great store by this ring; but in time he began to be vexed at being so often checked by its pricking, and so often stopped from doing what he wished. One day he had set his heart upon something that he was yet well aware was wrong, and he was about to do it in spite of the warning of the ring; but it pricked him so sharply that he drew it off his finger in a passion and threw it away, and from that moment he fell into bad ways and misfortunes, and came at last to a very sad end.

Now this is only a pleasant little story, but it is meant to help us to understand a great truth. We have all of us something like the prince's wonderful ring, which checks us when we do wrong, and makes us uneasy. Any one of us knows quite well that if we say a thing that is not true, or do a thing we know we ought not to do, and that we are afraid of being found out to have done, we feel something within us that makes us uneasy, and seems to tell us that we are guilty—this is conscience. Conscience is like the wonderful ring.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

MR. SAMUEL SHARPE'S TRANSLATION.

THERE is no book in the purity of which we all have so deep an interest as in the New Testament; and it ought to be more widely known among all our families that one of our most active and learned laymen has done an immense service for the cause of Christian truth in an improved translation of the New Testament. We may here add, that Mr. Sharpe's translation has the commendation of the *Athenæum*, and a number of religious journals not of our denomination, as the *best* translation of the original into the English language. The importance of every Unitarian family possessing a copy of this New Testament may be understood from a few doctrinal texts we shall now lay before our readers, texts which in the present authorised version are continually misleading.

The famous Trinitarian passage, 1 John, v. 7, "There are three that bear witness in heaven," &c., is left out, as every scholar knows it is not in the Greek, and only in modern times fully incorporated with the English text. The passage, Matt. xxviii. 19, "Baptising them in the name of the Father," &c., Mr. Sharpe renders "*into* the name of the Father," and thus two passages supposed to sustain the Trinity are rendered nugatory by a better translation.

It is still more interesting to us to see how almost every passage of the New Testament cited to uphold the deity of Christ is weakened when impartially rendered from the Greek. We shall give a few examples. The first few verses of the Gospel of John are made more simple by the reading, "All things were made by *it*" instead of "*he*"; and again, John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am," Mr. Sharpe translates "Before Abraham was born I was *he*." The accusation of the Jews, "Being a man, makest thyself God?" is rendered, "Makest thyself a God." In 1 John, iii. 16, the translators of the Authorised Version have thrust in the word, *God*, as having laid down his life for us, showing their desire to prop up the deity of Christ, while there is no word *God* in the original text. That often quoted passage, 1 Tim. iii. 16, "God manifest in the flesh," on the authority of all the best manuscripts,

stands, "One who was made manifest in the flesh." The word *God* is a forgery. And in Heb. iv., 8, the word *Jesus* inserted instead of Joshua as having given the children of Israel rest; this Mr. Sharpe corrects. There are a great number of corrections such as these which should be in the hands of the general public. We shall name a few more. Two important ones in Phil. ii. (1.) "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God," is acknowledged to be a gross blunder of the translators by almost every scholar, and which destroys the meaning of the apostle. This is altered in the improved version, which shows that the Apostle taught Jesus *did not* desire to appear as God. (2.) Our High Church neighbours who bow at the name of Jesus will find they have no authority in Scripture, but in an error of the translators. It is "in the name of Jesus" we have to worship God, which, no doubt, means in the same spirit as Jesus worshipped God. These are but a few of the passages simplified by a better translation concerning Christ, and have the approval of the best scholarship of our age.

It would be endless to cite the changes made in some of those fearful passages the translators years ago appear to have tried to make as black and threatening as possible. We are sorry to see the word *hell* in a single place in the New Testament, for there is nothing to justify its insertion anywhere in the Bible. The original words "Hades," "Sheol," and "Gehenna" never had the meaning now attached to our word *hell*. Mr. Sharpe has in several places very properly left the word *Gehenna* untranslated, as it meant a place of punishment — the Vale of Hinnom, near Jerusalem. The word *damnation* completely disappears from the New Testament under the pen of a true scholar, and condemned or judged takes its place. We may here add, it is not simply a preference of the translator for a softer word, but the necessity of truth that makes this change. And where the Apostle represents God saying, "Vengeance is mine," the improved translation is, "Punishment is mine." And where Christ is represented as saying that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven in this

world nor the world to come, is rendered "in this age nor the age to come," which confines the punishment to the present state.

How misleading are some of the texts as they at present stand! 2 Tim. iii. 16, is a case in point—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," &c. &c. The Apostle Paul was not so stupid as to write this, but as Mr. Sharpe has rendered it, "All writing inspired by God is also profitable." In Acts xxiv. 14, Paul is represented as saying, "He believes all things which are written in the law and in the prophets," whereas he said, "Believing all that is according to the law and that is written in the prophets," which shows a difference. The only place, Rom. v. 11, where the word "atonement" occurs is translated "reconciliation." Several texts which appear to speak disparagingly of both man and the material world, for which there is no authority, are greatly modified. Gal. i. 4, "The present evil world," is "The present evil age." Phil. iii. 21, "Who will change our vile body," is "mean body." Rom. viii. 6, "To be carnally minded is death," which appears to support innate depravity, is more properly rendered, "The minding of the flesh is death," i.e., a vicious life. 1 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of God," is rendered more truthfully, "The animal man."

We cannot now in our brief space do more than give a tithe of the advantages this new translation has over the authorised in making the teaching of Christ and his apostles more simple and natural, and we heartily recommend every one of our readers to possess a copy.

They can be had at 1s. 6d. each, ordered through Mr. Whitfield, 178, Strand, or if any of our friends send eighteen penny stamps to Mr. Wyche, 22, Hatfield-street, Blackfriars, London, a copy will be sent post free, and for 6s. five copies will be sent free. Our friends everywhere ought to promote the circulation of this improved translation, of which the *Ecclesiastic* and *English Churchman* both say, "We must admit that this is the most correct English version either of the whole or of any portion of the New Testament."

SIMPLICITY OF RELIGION.

BY J. B. HARRISON.

God's will includes every degree of righteousness that human beings can attain. It calls us to the practice of all that is good and just and pure. It requires us to turn away from all that is wrong in itself, and all that injures our fellow-men. The law of this life enjoins that we shall love God with our whole hearts, and our fellow men as ourselves, and that we shall show our love by our daily walk and conversation.

We note this as a peculiarity of the Christian religion, that it has a simplicity of essential character which belongs to no other religion in the world. By this quality it is adapted to the needs of common, simple people. This makes it much more useful to the world than if it were suited to help and save only the wise and learned, the world's teachers and rulers. Christianity recognises, as no other religion has ever done, the value of the common people, of the poor, the ignorant, and the obscure. These are as dear to God and to Christ as the wise and powerful. It is the glory of this religion that wherever men have its spirit "the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

Some people think religion is adapted only to those who have culture and knowledge, but it is for all classes. Knowledge is good, but religion takes men as they are, and for the wise and the ignorant alike it is the fulness of life. It is one great excellence of rational and liberal views of religion that they are so simple and plain that every person who sincerely wishes to do right can understand them. Christ's offer of salvation is addressed to those who can never know anything about the abstruse and difficult questions of metaphysical theology. A child can feel the divine influence of the religion of Christ, for love is its central principle, and this is mightier than knowledge.

Religion is very simple, plain, and direct in its relation to the duties of life. Its great practical value for us consists in the fact that it is a matter of personal concern. It requires and produces faithfulness in the common duties which belong alike to almost every one's life. It is our own duty to which we must attend. No one can do the will of God

for us, so as to save us, unless we do our own work. Let not the wisest and strongest dream that they can do without religion. They are not to be delivered by their wisdom, unless their wisdom leads them to do the will of God with a sense of their own great spiritual needs. Those things in religion by which it blesses and saves the simple and ignorant are equally needful for the wisest men.

I sometimes hear men try to show that they are very wise by speaking of religion and of religious observances in a slight and sneering way. When this does not show a bad heart, it always indicates a vacant, uncultivated mind. I have heard prayer spoken of in this way. Now philosophers may say what they choose, but as long as the world stands the mass of men will pray. They are moved to it by an ineradicable instinct in human nature. This instinct is implanted for good, and men in general will never be made better by putting prayer and the spirit of prayer out of their lives.

Some men sneer at the New Testament. I think of this book as standing sole and alone above all the other productions of the human mind; above all other results of the inspirations which God ever poured into the souls of His human children. I think God was in Judaism, and in the other historic religions; that these, too, were used by our Heavenly Father for the enlightenment and help of mankind in different times and parts of the world. But they were all but "schoolmasters to bring us to Christ." His is the only religion the world has ever had that is fitted in its nature to be a universal and everlasting religion. All the others are partial and temporary.

I know something of the other Scriptures, as they are called, or sacred books of the other religions; but I know of nothing else that can be, on any account, named or thought of in comparison with the New Testament. Only think of it! Where is the man who, when the bride of his heart, the mother of his child, lies dead before him, the light of his life gone out for ever—where is the man who, at that awful hour, would have his minister read a passage from Shakspeare, from Emerson, or Plato, at the grave side? Where is the book that can speak to him and for him in that darkness and agony? He will turn to the matchless consolations of the Hebrew and Chris-

tian Scriptures for light and sympathy and love and strength, such as speak in no other book the ages have produced, and so shall it be to the end of time.

ST. BRANDAN.

A FRIGHTFUL ghost-story invented of Judas Iscariot from a monkish brain, many centuries ago, has been lately versified by Mr. Matthew Arnold, who might, undoubtedly, have been better employed. The miserable disciple, after having delivered up his Master into the hands of an armed mob, himself betrayed by his avaricious heart, and perhaps hoping to compel Christ to a hasty avowal of his Messianic supremacy, could not bear the anguish of his disappointment and remorse; but threw down his bribe in the temple and "went and hanged himself." It was but the beginning of despair. For his crime, as St. Brandan assures us, he was plunged in the torments of hell for ever and ever, whose eternity was to be measured off by respites of a single hour in a year, the hour of Christ's nativity. That sacred season was to be one of rest for the soul in anguish, restored to earth from its prison-house of fire. The reprieve was a reward bestowed upon the wretched man for having once in the course of his mortal life thrown his cloak in charity over a needy leper. Iscariot had, at least, a great aptness for thanksgiving; for he was grateful to be allowed to sit up and cool himself on an iceberg near the north pole, full sixty minutes before sliding down again into his surges of flame eight thousand seven hundred and sixty hours save one. Oh, the ingenuity of the divine compassion! Oh, the computations of Almighty justice!

Under this whole supreme horror were set forth the divine mercy and equity. Which the worse? The odious sentence was but marked the fiercer by that dramatic charity and that Christmas fiction. Was here any trial of either Saviour or judge? Could this be He who prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do?" Was here, an award worthy to be connected with an affront against his person? Away with these real affronts against his majesty and his goodness! We have had more than enough of these goblins under holy names.

THE TRIALS OF A LITTLE KING.

"I BELIEVE," said our little Gretchen, "that a king dresses in silk and velvet every day. He can eat what he likes, he can drive out in pleasant weather, he can go to the theatre, and his servants must bring him all he asks for."

Ah, yes; certainly. Gretchen was right in some things, but not in everything. Let our wise Gretchen cast a glance towards a king's apartment in the year 1715.

Seventeen hundred and fifteen—that is so long ago! More than one hundred and fifty years; during which many drops of rain fell from heaven upon poor mother earth, and in which many, many men, in different countries, wept and smiled. In 1715, a beautiful boy, of five years and a few months old, sat in a royal palace, in the kingdom of France. The child was robed in purple velvet, because he was in mourning for his grandfather, Louis XIV., King of France.

The little king, an attractive child, was seated in a magnificent apartment that was adorned with rare pictures, superb furniture, and splendid carpets.

He sat alone, at an elegant little breakfast-table. Every delicacy that he asked for was there, for they brought him all he wanted. No servants were lacking; for behind the chair of the little five years' old king stood two noblemen, who waited for his commands. There were also many other persons in waiting, in another part of the room.

Louis ate—all alone—a delicate roasted dove, an apricot-tart, and drank a glass of wine. He knew how to eat the dove politely, but it was tedious and difficult for him to cut everything with a knife, so he took his royal fingers to help him.

"Where is my napkin?" he cried, when he had finished the task. "They haven't given me any napkin!" he continued. "Quick! quick! I want it!" holding out his hands up in the air in great distress.

The two noblemen who stood behind him hastened to bring him a napkin, but they disputed to whom belonged the honour of handing it to him; and so they stood, one holding it on one side, and one upon the other; and Louis XV. sat crying with impatience and anger, because he had waited so long holding up his hands.

A third distinguished lord who was in the room, but to whom the duty did not belong, had compassion on the little king, and brought a napkin to him.

"How tedious it is to day in the palace," said Louis XV. one afternoon; "why cannot I get out where all the other children are going?" He pointed to a crowd of citizens and of country people, gaily dressed, who passed by the palace with their children.

"Where are they going?" inquired the king.

"To the fair at St. Germain's," was the answer.

"Then I will go there too," said his little majesty.

Louis XV. jumped for joy at the thought of the pleasure of passing the lovely day in the open air, and of seeing all the beautifully dressed children again.

The coach with four handsome horses came to the door. They lifted the little king into it, and his tutor wished to follow him; but the Duke of M—— prevented it, for he said that the privilege of accompanying the king belonged to him.

Then a dispute arose between the two gentlemen, and neither would yield.

"But you may both sit near me," said the king.

"Your majesty, that will not be in order," was the answer. "The court must decide before we can go."

So Louis, who had been so childishly delighted with the prospect of a drive, was obliged to descend from the carriage, for the quarrel could not be settled at once. And Louis XV. remained, sadly looking out of the window, until night came, seeing the prettily dressed children coming home from the fair, with drums and fifes and cakes in their hands, while he stood alone by the window and wept.

The greatest misery of Louis XV. in his youth was his separation from Lord De Fleury. His grief for his beloved friend was so intense that De Fleury was sought for through the whole kingdom of France.

You ask me, dear Gretchen, where I heard about the trials of the little king. I cannot tell; but this I know, that little kings and great ones have much more to bear than you and I have. So be contented with your lot, and let kings ride in their carriages while you walk on foot.

THE CHURCH FURNACE

THE CHURCH FURNACE



ABBAY CHAPEL, TAVISTOCK.



HARRIET MARTINEAU.

ABBEY CHAPEL, TAVISTOCK.

THE accompanying drawing represents an interesting portion of the old Abbey of Tavistock, which in early times was renowned for the wealth, learning, and power of its abbots and their fraternity. The Abbey was dismantled in the time of Henry the Eighth; the monks were dispersed and their extensive landed property was bestowed by the king on John, Earl of Bedford.

In consequence of the Act of Uniformity being passed in 1661 which required every minister of the gospel to declare in writing his unfeigned assent and consent to everything contained in and prescribed by the Book of Common prayer, the Presbyterian ministers both in Plymouth and at Tavistock were ejected from their livings and thrown upon the world.

Mr. Hughes, vicar of St. Andrews, Plymouth, was cast into prison, and remained for nine months in a damp dungeon, on St. Nicholas Island. A short time before his death, this noble sufferer for conscience' sake uttered these remarkable words to a fellow-minister, who was about to leave him in consequence of a warrant having been issued against him for preaching as usual in his own church. "This dead cause of reformation for which we suffer, shall rise and revive again. Salvation shall come to the churches. The very means these men take to suppress and destroy it shall most effectually promote it."

Two thousand noble-minded men were silenced by the Act of Uniformity. These were eminently distinguished for their learning, piety, and benevolence; they were able, faithful, and popular preachers, and strenuous advocates for liberty, both civil and religious. They were driven from their homes and from the society of their friends, and exposed to the greatest difficulties and privations.

Wordsworth, notwithstanding his adherence to the Church of England as now established, paid the following tribute to these martyrs in the cause of religious liberty.

"Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject,
Those Unconforming, whom one rigorous day
Drives from their cures, a voluntary prey,
To poverty, and grief, and *disrespect*;
And some to want—as if by tempest wreck'd
On a wild coast—how destitute! Did they

Feel not that *conscience never can betray*;
That peace of mind is virtue's sure effect.
Their altars they forego, their homes they quit,
Fields which they love, and paths they daily
trod,

And cast the future upon Providence;
As men the dictate of whose inward sense
Outweighs the world! Whom self-deceiving
wit
Lures not from what they deem the cause of
God."

The sufferings of this noble army of Confessors were greatly increased by the operation of the Act against conventicles, which was passed in 1664, and which decreed "That every person above sixteen years of age, present at any meeting under pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than is the practice of the Church of England, where there are five persons more than the household, shall for the first offence by a justice of peace be recorded, and sent to jail three months, or pay a fine of five pounds; and for the second offence be in jail six months, or pay a fine of ten pounds; and the third time being convicted by a jury, shall be banished to some of the American plantations for seven years, or pay a fine of one hundred pounds; and in case they returned, they were to suffer death without benefit of clergy."

By virtue of this Act the jails were quickly filled with dissenting Protestants, and the trade of an informer was very gainful. "So great was the severity of these times," says Neale, that they were afraid to pray in their families, if above four of their acquaintance, who might have come to visit them, were present."

Fortunately the great and noble family of Russell, who had ever been supporters of civil and religious liberty, protected the ejected Presbyterian clergyman of Tavistock in his emergency. Since he was no longer permitted to preach in the church, the Earl of Bedford gave him in perpetuity the ancient abbot's chapel (one of the few perfect remains of the once proud monastery) and there, in the stone pulpit of the monks, he preached without let or hindrance during this time of fear and tyranny. An annuity of ten pounds was also granted to the minister of the Abbey Chapel by the Earl of Bedford.

This annuity has recently been withdrawn for some unassigned reason. The Duke of Bedford has since given fifty

pounds in consideration of the withdrawal of the annuity, but this recognition of the justice of the claim by a continuance of the sum first granted would have been more in accordance with the original endowment and with the usual liberality of sentiment of the House of Russell.

The three earliest preachers who officiated in the Abbey Chapel were ejected ministers. The first of these, the Rev. Thomas Larkham, M.A., was ejected from the parish church of Tavistock, and was followed to the Abbey Chapel by a considerable portion of his flock.

In the year 1666 was passed the Oxford, or Five Mile Act, which required all ejected ministers to remove five miles from any place where they had exercised their ministry, and not come, except when travelling, within the same distance of any city or corporate town. Notwithstanding these and other tyrannical enactments which continued in force more than twenty years, the Nonconformists met unmolested in the Abbey Chapel* to worship God according to their consciences.

The following is a list of the ministers who officiated in the Abbey Chapel :—

Rev. Thomas Larkham, M.A., ejected from Tavistock Church	From	To	
Rev. Wm. Pearce, ejected from Dunsford Church	1662—1669	7 yrs.	
Rev. Henry Flamank, ejected from Lanivet Church, Cornwall	1669—1688	19 "	
Rev. Jacob Sandercock (four years assistant to Mr. Flamank)	1688—1692	4 "	
Rev. Peter Jillard	1688—1729	41 "	
Various Ministers	1730—1741	11 "	
Rev. Bernard Dowdell	1741—1744	3 "	
Rev. Theophilus Edwards	1762—1772	10 "	
Rev. Wm. Evans	1772—1794	22 "	
Rev. Thomas May	1794—1841	47* "	
Rev. Henry Solly	1841—1842	1 "	
Rev. J. K. Montgomery	1842—1844	2 "	
Mr. John Commins	1844—1847	3 "	
Rev. G. H. Stanley	1847—1849	2† "	
Rev. J. Toplin	1849—1851	3 "	
Rev. D. Griffith	1851—1853	7 "	
Rev. T. Parris	1853—1866	8 "	
	Nov. 1866 Midr. 1868	18 mon.	

* This place of worship is generally supposed to have been the ancient refectory of the monks, but seeing that a noble dining-room (which many of us may remember as a former ball-room) was close adjoining, with two massive granite chimney-pieces, and a range of handsome mullioned windows the whole length of the room, it is not to be imagined that the monks preferred the cold and vault-like precincts of the chapel in which to enjoy their ample *refection*.—R. E.

MISS HARRIET MARTINEAU.

MISS MARTINEAU was born at Norwich in 1802, and at the age of twenty-one sent forth her first work, "Devotional Exercises for the Use of Young Persons." Since that time her name among our families has been a household word. She has been one of the most able and useful writers of this century, and has won the admiration of all classes. Her early taste for the pursuits of literature are ascribed to her partial deafness and to delicacy of health. Her pen has been employed with success on almost every topic of interest. Matter-of-fact life she has made as charming as romance, and at times as a novelist she has infused into her tales the most useful instruction for every-day duty. Her travels east and west are full of delightful scenery and sage reflections. Her essays, commendatory of a rational and practical faith, are marvellous productions, and how happy we should have been to have had to the present time so wise a pen to promote Unitarianism. Some have considered her "Traditions of Palestine" as among the best of her works, so full of tenderness of feeling and faith in religion; but the three works of hers, in which we, as Unitarians, have the most interest, are "Prize Essays," published by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in 1831, entitled, "The Essential Faith of the Universal Church," "The Faith as unfolded by many Prophets," and "Providence as manifested through Israel." Three distinct sets of judges declared in favour of Miss Martineau's productions. She then justly said—"It is because we feel our religion (Unitarianism) to be primitive Christianity that we are attached to it as other Christians are to theirs. It is because we feel we can carry back our opinions to a remoter antiquity than other churches that we prefer them, and though they were completely hidden under the unauthorised institutions of the middle ages, we find no difficulty in establishing their identity with those which were diffused by the messengers and under the sanction of God."

Miss Martineau has had several severe attacks of illness, which for a time have suspended her pen. Her books are not less studied and revered in America than in this country.

ON NATURAL RELIGION.

THOSE views of God, of his dealings with mankind, and our duties towards him and towards one another, which we gain from looking about on the world around us, are called Natural Religion. These are found to be very much the same as Jesus taught and what we Unitarians call Christianity. Some persons who have observed this have argued therefrom against the value of the debt that we owe to the Bible, as if we could have gained the same religious truths without its help. But this is not strictly honest. No man can say that he owes nothing to those who have gone before him, and that the knowledge which he found in the world when he came into it has been of no use to him. To read the New Testament and then say, "I could have learnt all this without its help," is not strictly honest.

This beautiful world and all the objects around us, the animals, the plants, and the heavenly bodies, must have had a Maker, a Great First Cause that brought them into existence. Nobody in his senses supposes they could have made themselves. To say that the animals were produced by their parents, or the plants by their seeds, does not remove the necessity for a Creator. Some one must have created the parents and the seeds. This Creator, then, we call God, and the more we study his works the more we admire them. When we think of the sun and moon and the countless number of stars, the animals, from the elephant and whale down to the insects which are only seen by the microscope, the equally great variety of plants, and the solid earth upon which we walk, we try to imagine to ourselves the power possessed by the Being who could have made such things, and we find it is so far beyond any power which we possess or can imagine, that we call it infinite. We can see no bounds to it, and conclude that God is All-powerful. If we look into the parts and uses of these several created beings, and find how each is fitted to perform its own work, we are led to think of the wisdom of the Creator. We see that the birds have wings fitted for flying, and fishes fins fitted for swimming. Those animals whose stomachs are suited for animal food have claws and teeth, which enable them to feed themselves. To each is given the means of keeping

itself alive, and for the benefit of helpless infants love is implanted in the breast of the parents to ensure their not being neglected. Every created object seems fitted for its place and for its purpose, and the more we study them the more we admire the wisdom of the Creator. If in some cases we do not understand his purposes, we safely conclude from past experience that it arises, not from his mistakes, but from our ignorance, and we call God All-wise and All-powerful. We reason in the same way about his goodness. We observe so much happiness, and we see in so many cases that the troubles and misfortunes which befall us, and for the time make us unhappy, are yet, like wholesome chastisement, productive of good, that we think of God's goodness as of his wisdom, namely, that any seeming drawbacks arise from our ignorance, not from his deficiency, and we declare Him to be All-good.

The further examination of God's works and dealings with mankind teaches us that He acts by universal laws. There is no break in the regularity by which a given cause always produces the same effect. No contradictory purposes are seen, and all creation tells us that there are not more gods than one. The pagans in their ignorance thought otherwise. They thought that the Being who made the storm could not be the same as the Being who made the sunshine; that the Being who made men love one another could not be the same as the Being who caused wars and bloodshed upon earth. Even many Christians cannot believe that a merciful and kind God can at the same time punish men for their sins, and they retain some of the old pagan errors. Though they do not say that there are three gods, they divide Him into three parts, and say that one is the stern punisher, and the other the kind friend who intercedes for us, while the third is the Comforter and Spiritual teacher; and they find passages in the New Testament which they think support them in this opinion. They fix upon the strong expressions by which the apostles declare their admiration of Jesus, and quote these as declaring that Jesus is a second person in the Godhead. They take other passages in which, from the reverential custom of not using the name of God unnecessarily, the

writer speaks of his Holy Spirit as acting on mankind and the world, and misled by these, they make the Holy Spirit into the third person in the Godhead. In this way the so-called orthodox Christians are so unfortunate as to find Natural and Revealed Religion in direct contradiction, while Unitarians find them in perfect agreement. In our eyes, whether we read the Bible or the works of creation, we find there is one God, simple and undivided, who created and governs the world by his power, his wisdom, and his goodness, which qualities in an infinite self-existent Being may perhaps be all one and the same, and whom Jesus calls his God and our God, his Father and our Father.

DAME MARGARET.

"A THOUSAND beautiful words are not worth so much as one single good deed, and every good deed becomes the germ of new deeds in us."

Once a poor weaver, with his three children, lay low in a grievous sickness, and his dear wife had much work and great sorrow. All that these good people had left was spent in this sickness: yes, they were even obliged to pawn their little bedding and few pieces of furniture. As they had until now been able to take care of themselves by hard and steady labour, they were ashamed to beg, and their small poor hut had not the common appearance of poverty.

Once for a whole day long had these four poor people eaten nothing but a crust of bread. They lay upon a miserable bed, pale and emaciated, and longing for food.

The morning was bright without, but it was dark in the little lowly room, and the wife looked with tears in her eyes through the window to heaven. Then her husband said with a faint voice, "Perhaps Dame Barbel and Dame Margaret would aid us with a few pence; they have not much for themselves, but they are industrious and frugal, so they may be able to help us."

"I will go to them," said the woman, with hope in her heart, and started at once.

Dame Barbel, to whom she went first, sat at her spinning-wheel, but was reading in her Bible. The poor weaver pictured her distress and wept bitterly.

The spinner stood up and said, "Ah, poor woman, what misery you have endured!

Well, God will turn it all to good for you; He is the best helper."

The poor woman still begged her aid. "I divide my last crust with the poor," said Dame Barbel, "but now I cannot serve you, God be with you, dear woman."

When the weaver went away Dame Barbel sat down again behind her spinning-wheel and read on.

The poor weaver, with downcast hope, tottered to Dame Margaret. She was busily at work. When she heard the complaint of the petitioner she said, "Ah, if I was not so poor! If I had anything I would gladly give it to you! But the winter has taken my all; for many weeks I had no money, and I ate my last bit of bread last evening. For this day's work I shall receive something to eat and to drink, but no money, for I owe now for the rent. Ah! I have thought of something. Go home now, and I will soon bring you a few pence."

As soon as the weaver had gone Dame Margaret went to her work-table, on which lay her prayer-book. She took it up and thought, "I can get a few pence for this, and surely the dear God will accept it graciously if I pray to Him in future from my weak, simple heart, instead of the book."

Dame Margaret went to a man who traded in new and old books, offered him her prayer-book for sale, and received sixpence for it. Then she ran with the money to the starving weavers, who thanked her with tears. Dame Margaret wept also, yet was she very happy that she had been able to do something for her poor neighbours.

Then she returned to her work, which went on well, and from that time she prayed from her own simple heart.

THE DYING CHILD'S REQUEST.

"Let me see the Sunshine."

IN the very heart of London and just behind some of its largest shops, where ladies go to buy rich silks and costly jewellery, is a small court of tall, dingy and squalid houses seen by none but the very poor. The little space which they enclose is always crowded in the daytime by a host of poor, little, dirty children, who dare not venture into the narrow and busy street for fear of being run over. So here they are confined, and you may see them anyday, some playing

with skipping-rope, some pulling others about on a piece of wood which serves for a cart, some letting the water out of the butt or splashing it on their companions, who in return blind them with dust and ashes out of the bin which stands close by. There is a great deal of shouting and screaming going on at all times, which, mingling with the roll of the carriages in the streets adjoining, keep the place in a perpetual uproar. From side to side are stretched a few cords which are always full of clothes, more or less clean and whole, flapping in the little wind which can find its way into this wretched place and keeping what little sunlight there even ventures to shine here from the heads of the little ones below. On one side of this court, right up in the corner, was a dismal hovel, in which one evening lay a poor sick child on a miserable bed. She moaned and cried for her father, who was later home from work than usual. When he came, she rose in her bed, put out her poor, little, wasted arms, and cried "Father, take me up: carry me to the window. There,—thank you, dear father." The father sat him down on a chair and held her gently away from the light. "No, father," she said, "no; let me see the sunshine. See there"—pointing to the upper portion of the opposite wall, on which the last rays of the setting sun cast a warm and beautiful light—"see there,—it has come to take me to heaven. There will be always sunshine in heaven, father. Call mother, and Bessy, and Georgey, and let them see the sunshine. Oh! I do love the sunshine." Her little eyes grew very dim, her sweet voice sank very low, but she said very distinctly, "Father, mother, kiss me,—I am going—with the sunshine." And as the last ray glided off the opposite wall, her little spirit took its flight to that happy place where "they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." The loss of little Mary—for that was her name—was a great grief to her father, but when he has been cast down and sad of heart, when distress and affliction have been heavy upon him, and life seemed dark and dreary, the words of his darling have come back to him as the echo of an angel's song, and he has said, fixing his thoughts on One who never leaves us nor forsakes us—"Father, let me see the sunshine,"—and he has had comfort.

A CHRISTIAN'S CREED.

I BELIEVE in dreams of duty,
Warnings where they can't control,
Fragments of the glorious beauty
That once filled th' unfallen soul;
In the godlike wreck of nature
Sin did in the sinner leave,
That may still regain the stature
It hath fallen from—I believe.

I believe in human kindness,
Large amid the sons of men;
Nobler far in willing blindness
Than in censure's keenest ken:
In the gentleness that slowly
Sanctions what would others grieve,
In the trust that, deep and holy,
Hopeth all things—I believe.

I believe in self-denial,
And in secret throb of joy;
In the love that lives through trial,
Dying not, though death destroy;
In those fond and full believings
That, though all the world deceive,
Will not let its dark deceivings
Wake suspicion—I believe.

I believe in man's affection,
Tender, true, unselfish, high;
Infancy's almost perfection,
And in woman's purity;
In *his* lofty soul-sustaining,
That can to *one* purpose cleave;
In *her* gentle uncomplaining
Peace and patience—I believe.

I believe in self-devotion,
The long sacrifice of years,
Noblest fruits of deep emotion,
Man's blood-shedding, woman's tears:
In the pure, prevailing passion
Human hearts by God conceive,
And, despite the world's cold fashion,
Live and die for—I believe.

I believe in human weakness
Trying to be strong and true;
Owning its impassioned meekness,
What it would but could not do:
In its consciousness of failing,
Which the less it doth perceive,
Doth the more leave unavailing
All its efforts—I believe.

I believe in love renewing
All that sin hath swept away,
Leaven-like its work pursuing,
Night by night and day by day:
In the power of its remoulding,
In the grace of its reprieve,
In the glory of beholding
Its perfection—I believe.

I believe in love eternal,
Fixed in God's unchanging will,
That beneath the deep infernal
Hath a depth that's deeper still;
In its patience, its endurance
To forbear and to retrieve,
In the large and full assurance
Of its triumph—I believe.—*Good Words.*

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

NOT SO INSANE.—A clergyman, the chaplain to a county lunatic asylum, lately preached a sermon on the text, "Our conversation is in heaven." When he came down from the pulpit one of the lunatics said to him, "I have always understood, Sir, that that text ought to be translated, 'Our citizenship is in heaven.'" The clergyman promised to look into the matter when he got home, when turning to an improved translation of the New Testament he found that the lunatic was right. He thereupon made a resolution never again to explain a text without first looking at an improved version, remarking, "It is not agreeable to have your blunders pointed out to you by men who have only half their wits about them."

REPETITION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.—One of our correspondents writes:—"When my niece was a little girl, and was sent to a school in the borough, the children were taken to church. On returning home she told her mother where she had been, and that they were in church "a long time," and the minister repeated the Lord's prayer so many times. "I think," she added, "it was when he did not know what else to say he said it again."

SCRIPTURALLY ANSWERED.—When the Erie Canal was first started the subject of investing in it was discussed in a Quaker business meeting of the men. It was opposed by an influential member—no other than Elias Hicks—on the ground of its being a speculation. Among other objections, he went on to say, "When God created the world, if he had wished canals he would have made them." Thereupon, "a weighty Friend" (one of their terms) rose up and said slowly, in the intoning voice in which they always speak in meeting:

"And Jacob dig-ged a well,"

and sat down.

FREE CHURCHISM.—The Free Church of Scotland, since the separation from the Presbyterian Establishment in 1843, when nearly 500 clergymen voluntarily resigned their homes and livings, has built 900 churches, 650 mansees, three theological colleges, two normal or training institutions, and 500 schools. Its average annual income for the three years previous to 1868 has been £370,000, and during its twenty-five years of existence, without State support, the sum raised by her amounts to over £8,000,000.

THE POPE ON THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN.—Writing to the Bishop of Orleans he says that whereas "daring and cynical public writers have long been attempting to pervert youth by impious manoeuvres, appeals to bad passions, and insidious distortions of history, it has been reserved for the present day to see an attack upon the natural modesty of woman, an attempt to drag her into public life, to divert her from private and domestic duties, to puff her up with ideas of false and vain science, and make her, instead of being the pride and glory of her husband, and the delight of her family, a source of scandal and divisions, and a stumbling block perverting her children." The Pope also tells his brother of Orleans that

"he is quite sure that the zeal and united efforts of the clergy and bishops will prevent fathers of families from allowing their daughters to attend the new lectures."

VERY CURIOUS.—"They are all very much occupied in burying a live native—a man who has been described in various travels, who says he has the power of existing in a trance, and who has made a vow to be buried for twelve years. We have seen a great many people who have seen him buried, a guard placed, and even a house built over the grave, and have seen him dug up again at the end of two months apparently a corpse, but he comes to again. Dr. D. was quite incredulous, but says in his letter to-day, that after hearing all the witnesses, and seeing the man, he has become quite a convert. They were all going to attend the burying in the afternoon, and the man had desired that he might not be dug up till the Governor-General's arrival at Lahore next November. He offered to come and be buried here, but Runjeet did not approve of it."—*Letters from the Upper Provinces of India, by the Hon. Emily Eden.*

BAD LANGUAGE.—We especially commend the following extract to the thoughtful study of the young. Nothing is so disgusting and repugnant to the feelings of the noble and good as to hear the young, or even the old, use low language. "We would guard the young against the use of every word that is not strictly proper. Use no profane expression—allude to no sentence that will put to blush the most sensitive. You know not the tendency of habitually using indecent and profane language; it may never be obliterated from your heart. When you grow up you will find at your tongue's end some expressions which you would not use for any money. It was once used when you were quite young. By being careful you will save yourself a great deal of mortification and sorrow. Good men have been taken ill and become delirious. In these moments they used the most vile and improper language imaginable. When informed of it, after restoration to health, they had no idea of the pain they had given their friends, and stated that they had learned and repeated the expressions in childhood, and though years had passed since they had spoken a word, they had been indelibly stamped upon the heart. Think of this, you who are tempted to use improper language, and never disgrace yourselves."

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